

# The Spokesman

## WEEKLY

Vol. 34 No. 20

14th January, 1985

Price : Re. 1/-

## THREE-MAN MINISTERIAL PANEL ON PUNJAB DELAYING TACTICS

### Much Depends On Rajiv Gandhi's Own Views

No clearcut clues are available how the Punjab tangle will be solved. Mainly because the government continues to move about in labyrinths of its own making and the outsider has no means of knowing how it will emerge with an acceptable solution.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi did make good his election promise to give Punjab top priority. And within four days of being sworn in afresh after the Lok Sabha poll, he appointed a three-man panel to tackle the Punjab problem. Now he has made known that the panel shall have to produce results within a specified time limit.

This is not bad but not good enough.

Normally, a committee is appointed to delay a decision.

Last month he had been telling all that he had a formula in mind which he would disclose after the elections if returned to power. But now he is keeping his cards close to the chest. Maybe he wants to spring a surprise.

No one can have apprehensions about the three members.

Home Minister S.B. Chavan has been for long having a close look at the developing situation in the State. As he would be officially and directly involved for the first time, he will not be encumbered with what transpired before between the government and the Akali delegates. Defence Minister Mr. Narasimha Rao had never taken a rigid position either in bilateral or tripartite talks of last few years.

Education Minister K.C. Pant is known for his reasonableness and persistence. As union minister of state of home affairs

in mid-1970, he had successfully handled the highly explosive situation of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.

The new ministerial panel need not go into the matter de novo. Instead, it should pick up the old threads, have a minute and comprehensive look at any

new angles involved, and leave no loose ends.

The issues are well known and have been thrashed threadbare in series of talks with Akali delegations.

Main hurdle is the future of Chandigarh. Akalis have been willing to hand over to Haryana 17 villages along the Ghaggar, with an area equal to that of the union territory, so that it could build, if it is so attached to the City Beautiful's surroundings, a new capital which could be called New Chandigarh.

It could be more modern and a more bustling regional centre than the old one. The new project could also be a powerful motor for generating jobs and incomes.

The issue of surplus Ravi-Beas waters could be referred to the supreme court. Centre-state relations are being looked into by the Sarkaria commission and the Anandpur Sahib Resolution could be referred to it. A separate personal law for the Sikhs had already been accepted

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## Sikhs Being Maligned Unnecessarily On Khalistan Issue

### THEY SIMPLY WANT MORE STATE AUTONOMY WITHIN INDIAN UNION

The new rulers of India, led by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, have not shed their old foibles and prejudices and take undisguised pleasure in lashing at the Akalis for no fault of theirs.

They want all other Indians to believe that Sikhs are out to dismember the country by asking a separate and sovereign Sikh state. These persons allege that this consummation is sought with the help of foreign powers, though they have never been able to identify these powers.

The naked truth is that no Sikh worth his salt and no Akali of any eminence has ever asked for Khalistan or something outside the Indian Union.

Even Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale never asked for it. All he said was: "If the government gives us Khalistan, we shall not refuse it." This

means that he never vowed to work for its creation. He merely agreed to accept it if offered as a gift.

Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi insists on the total acceptance of Anandpur Sahib Resolution which wants the centre to retain only four subjects—defence, external affairs, currency and communications—and hand over all others to the states. By no stretch of imagination can this be described as seeking something outside the Indian union.

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal and men of his Shriomani Akali Dal would be satisfied if the Anandpur Sahib Resolution is referred to the Sarkaria commission which is looking into centre-state relations.

At the most, the resolution is a working paper for talks with the centre. The trouble is that when Akalis demand something, they are dubbed as traitors or unpatriotic lot determined to bury the country. But when the same demand is made by other parties or Hindu majority states, no such stigmas are attached to them.

This only shows that the rulers are looking at the problem with coloured glasses. If they take down their blinkers, they would be able to gauge the Sikh demands in a better way.



# Demand For Special Status For Sikhs Not Unconstitutional

## ALREADY SUCH PROVISIONS FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES AND STATES

Anandpur Sahib Resolution continues to be a hot debating point.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi says it cannot be made the basis of talks with Akalis but he is not averse to its reference to the Sarkaria commission.

Jathedar Surjan Singh Thekedar, convenor of the ad hoc committee of Shiromani Akali Dal, has reiterated that no solution would be acceptable to this party unless this resolution is accepted in toto. This is precisely the position maintained by Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi.

Of its three versions circulating in the country, the one authenticated by Sant Longowal represents the view of his group which exercises sway over nearly 90 percent of the Sikh masses. The Talwandi group is like the proverbial Dutch army—all generals and no soldiers. Other smaller rumps do not count.

It is wrong to believe that Akali delegates, in their negotiations with the central government, insisted on the resolution's total acceptance. All they insisted on was that it be referred to the Sarkaria Commission. Then the government did not agree. Now Mr. Gandhi is not repulsive in his approach. This is a net gain.

The resolution is a much-maligned document. But it is just a continuation of an age-old demand for a true federal setup in the country and cannot be termed as a separatist or secessionist move simply because it is sponsored by Akalis.

The federal formula in the resolution is based on the Simon commission report of 1930. Then the Congress Party had asked for "real self-government" in the then provinces. But the British parliament thought the idea of an Indian federation was too liberal and introduced the scheme of restricted distribution of power between the centre and the provinces under the Government of India Act, 1935. This was not accepted by Congress party leaders and the movement for Indian independence gained momentum.

The Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946 reiterated the earlier formula but strangely, the Indian constituent assembly opted for the status-quo in centre-state relations and stuck to the restricted scheme laid down in 1935 Act which is continuing till today.

Sikhs cannot be subjected to whiplash for demanding a special

status. There is a precedent.

Part XXI of the constitution lists a number of special provisions which were introduced in 1950's to accommodate various religious and linguistic aspirations. The special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 is well known. What is not widely known is the gamut of special privileges enjoyed by Maharashtrians, Gujaratis, Telegus, Nagas, Assamese, Manipuris and Sikkimese under Articles 371 and 371-A to 371-F.

If everyone or every region is equal under the constitution, there should not be any one or any area more equal than others. Thus, if it is not possible to grant special states to the Sikhs, all such provisions for other states and communities should be removed from the constitution.

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restraint shown so far by Sikhs of Ludhiana, we call upon them in particular and all other Sikhs in general to remain peaceful under all provocative circumstances and to maintain law and order everywhere and not to play into the hands of certain communal (anti-Sikh) elements of the States, whose aim is to provoke communal clash and disturb the peaceful atmosphere of Punjab, which peace we should maintain and preserve at all costs."



12th January, 1955

### AKALI DAL DEMANDS JUDICIAL ENQUIRY

(An editorial)

The Akali Dal's Working Committee, with Master Tara Singh as President, released its resolution on the Ludhiana happenings saying "The Committee brings to the notice of Government, the serious and grave situation at Ludhiana and urges upon it to take immediate steps to stop the highly provocative and communal acts of certain mischievous people whose main purpose seems to be to disturb the peaceful atmosphere of Punjab and dub Sikhs for it."

The resolution says that a peaceful procession to celebrate Guru Gobind Singh's birthday was taken out through a settled route and no provocative slogans were used. It was simply mischievous to say that anti-Nehru slogans had been raised. On the other hand, certain persons out to create trouble and distributed leaflets and posters, couched in provocative and highly objectionable language against Akalis and their leaders, many days before the procession was due and had proclaimed with the beat of drum that the procession would be stopped. The posters had called upon the Maha Punjab supporters to collect in Ghas Mandi, where actually the trouble took place later. When the procession reached there, counter slogans were raised; brick-bats from surrounding house tops were thrown at the peaceful procession. Certain highly placed officials, in spite of pre-knowledge of the intention of the hostile crowd which had collected at Ghas Mandi, failed to take any steps in time to prevent the ugly situation. Since the proclamation of Section 144, some persons, who had instigated the whole trouble, are taking out processions to break law and order and terrorise peaceful Sikh citizens.

"The Shiromani Akali Dal demands an impartial judicial enquiry with which respectable members of public opinion and of known integrity should be integrated.

"While we appreciate the  
(Continued on column three)

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## A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

Of all religions this the best religion,  
To utter the Holy Name with adoration, and to do good deeds.  
—Guru Arjan Dev

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## SIKH PSYCHE

Sikh problem is entirely psychological and not an administrative one. It cannot be solved with armed actions or police bludgeons. It has to be tackled with wisdom, compassion, love and statesmanship. There is no doubt that following the army's storming of the Golden Temple complex in June last, every member of the community, except known sycophants who play serenades to the ruling party day and night and their number can be counted on the fingers of one hand, felt extremely hurt. This alienation was further widened with the riots which followed Mrs. Gandhi's assassination. Now the dire need of the hour is to end this alienation and bring back the Sikhs into the national mainstream. Sikh history is pregnant with hundreds, if not thousands, of instances when they sacrificed everything for the motherland; this was true during the Mughal and British rules; after independence, they displayed their love for the country by making huge sacrifices during the four wars with Pakistan and China. With the background of their valour, it is painful that their number in the armed forces is being reduced to just two percent—their population ratio.

Also it is not a question of patriots versus traitors and nationalists versus anti-national elements. Sikh patriotism has never been in doubt at any time in history. Rather, they have displayed in more ample measure than any other community. If the Hindus had not rejoiced over the army action against Sikh shrines in June last and if Hindu hoodlums, with the open connivance of ruling party leaders, if not at national level, at least the local level, had not indulged in wholesale death and destruction of Sikhs and their properties last November, Sikh wounds would not have become so deep and so gangrenous. Hindus have never bothered to listen to the bemoanings of anguished Sikh hearts. Rightly or wrongly, Sikhs feel that they are being made whipping boys for no rhyme or reason.

As first instalment of any march toward a solution, Sikhs' attachment to Punjab has to be understood and valued. Concentrated most as they are there, the state has the hallow of their homeland. And its progress and eminence is their main concern. Unfortunately, Punjab Hindus, especially of the Arya Samaj brand, have chosen to oppose every Sikh demand, even though some of them, especially economic ones, would benefit them most than Sikhs.

The much-advertised "healing touch" has become a meaningless phrase. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi does not mention it at all; only his mother was fond of parading it about. Rather, he talks of "revenge but with peaceful means." This is an enigma to Sikhs and other sane persons. Only when the government orders a high-level judicial inquiry into the recent riots, punishes the guilty and ensures full security to Sikhs with definite action and not mere words, can Sikhs feel they are wanted in India.

## DELIVERANCE OF THE FORTY

On 14th January, 1762 Guru Gobind Singh fought his last battle at Mukatsar. The forty Sikhs who had left the Guru earlier after signing a disclaimer also fought in this battle. The Tenth Master tore off the disclaimer and blessed the forty martyrs.

The forty Sikhs who had left Anandpur after disowning the Guru were smitten with remorse at their betrayal of the Guru in the hour of need. When news of this great betrayal and cowardice reached the village folk of their native villages they were mocked and jeered at by all and sundry.

Now they were looking for a chance to atone for this act of weakness and cowardice. Pretty soon the opportunity came their way.

A party of Sikhs of the Majha region near Amritsar were planning to go to the Guru who was at that time resting in Malwa with a view to offering their good offices to mediate between him and the Emperor Aurangzeb with whom they wielded some influence and thus to end the long drawn-out struggle between the two.

When the Sikhs of Majha met the Guru they put up to him their proposal of reconciliation with the emperor. But the Guru silenced them with the following stern reply:—

"I was never fighting to defend my person. I have been fighting for a cause, a principle and I have sacrificed all my four sons, my father and my mother for this very cause. Now you advise me to make up with the emperor in order to save myself. This will never happen. He who wants to buy peace at the cost of independence let him make peace with the tyrant. But as long as there is breath in me I shall never, never do that. Nor will anybody who calls himself my Sikh."

Some of these peace-makers returned home after hearing this determined reply of the Guru. But other remained behind to follow him at any cost. When the so-called peace-makers informed others of Guru's determination to fight injustice to the bitter end, many Sikhs of Majha made up their mind to help the Guru in this noble cause. Their leader was a brave lady called Mayee Bhago. The forty Sikhs also decided to join this party of the fearless Sikhs.

This party swelled into a small army as the other Sikhs joined them in the way. When they were about to reach the Guru they encountered the Mughal army sent by Wazir Khan to capture the Guru. At a place called Khidrana near Ferozepur the two forces met. Guru Gobind Singh took his position on a high ground

about a mile and a half away from the Sikh Camp. A fierce battle raged between the devoted followers of the Guru and at least ten thousand men of the enemy. It was an unequal battle and the Sikhs suffered heavy casualties. The Mughal army too suffered heavily.

When there was a pause in fighting at night-fall, the Mughal army clamoured for water which was in short supply in that dry area. It was no joke to maintain such a huge army without proper supply of water.

So the Mughal army withdrew and the battlefield was strewn with the dead on both sides.

Guru Gobind Singh who had claimed a heavy toll of the enemy by keeping up an incessant shower of arrows from his high position visited the battlefield to see the Sikhs who had so bravely laid their lives for him.

And lo! among the dead and the dying were those forty Sikhs who had betrayed the Guru at Anandpur. He went to each of his Sikhs, placed their head on his lap and cleared their faces of the blood and uttered words of comfort and solace to his dying Sikhs.

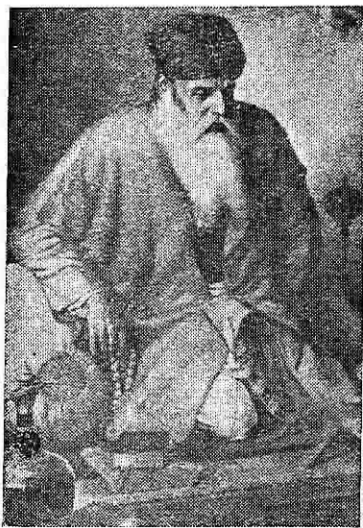
Suddenly he came upon one who was the leader of the forty. His name was Mahan Singh. He was still breathing but the life blood was oozing out fast. The Guru recognized him and patted on his cheeks. He opened his eyes and seeing the Guru showing such affection towards him, a smile played on his lips. The Guru said, "O my brave Mahan Singh, I am very much moved and impressed by the sacrifice of your men. Ask for any boon and it shall be granted."

On hearing these words of the Guru, Mahan Singh seemed to be reviving. With one great effort he managed to utter these words—"O Lord, if you are so kind as to grant me a boon then grant my last wish. Tear that paper on which we had written that we were not your Sikhs and you were not our Guru. Tear it so that all of us may die in the knowledge that we have been pardoned and claimed back by the Guru. This is my last wish."

The Guru took out that piece of paper from his belt and before the fast-closing eyes of Mahan Singh tore it to pieces saying "all of you have achieved deliverance." Mahan Singh smiled the last smile and died in peace, thanking the Guru for claiming all of them back into his fold.



According to the earliest Sikh tradition, the foundation-stone of the Harimandir was laid by Guru Arjan himself. A mason, so goes the story accidentally displaced the brick (foundation stone). On seeing this, the Guru prophesied that the foundation would be laid again in the near future. This version of Bhai Santokh Singh is carried by almost all subsequent Sikh sources right up to the twentieth century. Gian Singh Giani has thought it fit to add to the version the fact that the foundation of the temple was laid by Guru Arjan on Kartik Sudi 5, 1645 BK (AD 1588). The renowned English scholar, M.A. Macauliffe, who sought help from Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha for collecting data for his book, *The Sikh Religion*, records that Guru Arjan laid the foundation of the Harimandir on 1st Magh, 1645 BK (AD 1589). The same date is to be found in the *Mahankosh* of Kahan Singh Nabha. Two Modern Sikh historians, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, accept this version. The later Sikh tradition, however, persists in believing that the foundation of the Temple was laid, by the Muslim Saint, Mir Mohammad (AD 1550-1635) popularly known as Hazrat Mian Mir of Lahore,



On January 14, 1589 Hazrat Mian Mir, a Muslim Sufi Saint of Lahore was invited by Guru Arjan Dev to lay the foundation of the Golden Temple.

on a request from Guru Arjan, the year being the same. The first recorded reference to this version is to be met in *The Punjab Notes and Queries*. It records that "The foundation-stone of the Harimandir was laid by Mian Mir... between whom and Guru Ram Das there existed a strong friendship." The contributor of the entry, E. Nicholl, (Secretary, Municipal Committee, Amritsar) does not cite any authority; he merely states the fact. Likewise, he attributes the story relating to the mason's accidentally displacing

the brick and the prophecy regarding the relaying of the foundation by Mian Mir. It is a pity that this fact is not supported by any of the earlier Sikh sources, nor by Persian chroniclers including biographers of Saint Mian Mir. This tradition, however, got a strong footing in the twentieth century Sikh literature and was adopted by both Indian and European scholars writing on the subject. Soon, this version gained currency. Even the Report issued by the Darbar Sahib Authority followed this version.

The construction work at the Temple went on with great enthusiasm. A large number of Sikhs participated in the work. They took *sewa* at the site as part of their daily work. This they rendered with utmost devotion. They worked hard day and night. Some of the very devoted Sikhs passed into legends and, today, proudly adorn pages of Sikh history.

The construction work at the Temple went on incessantly with no break or hindrance. Even as its construction was in the offing, the news of a unique pilgrimage centre being set up by the Guru, spread far and wide. The Sikhs began to visit Amritsar in large numbers. The devotees contributed their mite from their earnings towards the construction without any break. Collection of funds was also made from the neighbouring hill states. Rich people sent in large donations. As an instance, Santokh Singh, author of *Sri Gur Pratap Suraj Granth* gives the names of two *chaudaris*, Lal Dhillon and Langah, both of Patti. Both the *chaudaris*, not only offered hard cash but provided labour also and took part in the *sewa* themselves. The *masands* of the nearby and far-off places also collected large sums for the purpose. All the Sikhs engaged in collecting funds for the work worked honestly. No hindrance occurred during the time the construction was going on. The tank and the Temple, when completed, presented a beautiful sight. Guru Arjan composed the following hymn to commemorate the occasion and highlighted the unique virtues of the holy bath in the tank and the blessings accruing from it:

"The Creator—Lord Himself, became my support  
And so no harm came to me.  
The Guru hath perfected my Ablution.  
And contemplating the Lord,  
my sins have been washed off.

# Foundation of Harimandir Sahib

By : Dr. Madanjit Kaur

O Saints, beauteous is the tank of Ram Das;  
Yea, whosoever bathes in it,  
his whole progeny is blest.  
He is acclaimed by the whole world,  
And all the desires of his mind are fulfilled.  
Bathing, his mind is in peace,  
For, he contemplates God, his Lord.  
He who bathes in this tank of the Saints  
Receiveth the Supreme Bliss.  
He dieth not, nor cometh, nor goeth;  
(For) he dwelleth only upon the Lord's Name.  
He alone knoweth this wisdom of the Lord  
Whom the Lord blesseth with mercy.  
Nanak seeks the refuge of God, the Lord,  
And all his woes and cares are past."

—Guru Granth Sahib, p. 623.  
The construction of the Temple, witnessed scenes of unique voluntary services offered by the Sikhs. Their selfless, sincere and hard labour was duly acknowledged by the Guru. All the Sikhs participating in the *sewa* were adequately rewarded with money or blessings (*bakhshish*).

Simultaneously with the construction of the Temple, plans were made to expand and develop the town. New markets were opened and trade was encouraged. In due courses, people from different walks of life, as also from different caste-groups, settled there. They were encouraged to make it their permanent home. This saw the city grow in population in no time. The inhabitants and traders of Lahore, however, could not reconcile with the rapid growth of the town. They ridiculed the planning of a city around a big tank in a low-lying area, and feared loss of property and their ware during the rainy season. Their forebodings alarmed the business community at Amritsar. They approached the Guru and expressed their fears and discussed the matter with him. The Guru assured them that there was no danger to their life or property. On the contrary he prophesied a bright future for them and the town. We have in the holy scripture a hymn by Guru Arjan, embodying his vision of the town:

Eternal is this city of my Guru—my God.  
Contemplating (herein) the Name, I have attained Bliss  
And have attained all the fruits that my mind desired;

Yes, the Creator Himself has established it.

I'm blest with gladness and all my kindred and followers are happy.

And they all sing the praises of the Perfect Lord and all their affairs are adjusted.

Our Lord, God Himself is our Refuge;

Himself is He, our Father and Mother.

Sayeth Nanak: "I'm sacrifice unto the

True Guru who hath blest this city.

—Guru Granth Sahib, p. 783.

With the coming up of the Harimandir, Amritsar attained the status of a great holy place. Its praise spread far and wide. The local Sikhs visited the temple daily; the Sikhs of the nearby areas also frequented it on various occasions, whereas Sikhs from distant places visited it twice a year i.e. on Diwali and Baisakhi.

The next remarkable development connected with the Harimandir was the compilation of the sacred writings of the Sikhs. While the Guru was on tour planning Sikh centres in the nearby areas or inspecting their working it was reported to him that his elder brother Prithi Chand was distorting the Guru's *bani* and attributing some of the Guru's compositions to himself to gain popularity amongst the Sikhs. Guru Arjan Dev took a serious view of this lapse on the part of Prithi Chand. He immediately abandoned his tour and returned to Amritsar. He resolved to collect the authentic *bani* of his predecessors and prepare an anthology of the sacred writings for use by the Sikhs. He collected genuine *bani* of the first four Sikh Gurus. To their *bani* he added his own compositions and also selections from the writings of some Hindu *bhaktas* and a few Muslim saints. The criterion laid down for the inclusion of hymns in the Sikh scripture was the Unity of God and the brotherhood of man. The hymns selected finally for the purpose were dictated by the Guru to Bhai Gurdas. This went on by the side of Ramsar, a quiet and beautiful place, away from the hustle and bustle of the town. When Guru Arjan was busy compiling the holy Granth, it was reported to Emperor Akbar by a faction enemical to the Guru (the Prithi Chand's group) that the book of the Sikhs, under preparation, contained verses derogatory to the Muslim Prophet and the Hindu gods.

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# Sikhs will always have a bright future

## A message of 'Chardikala' for 1985

By : Sardar Bhagwant Singh Dalawari

What has happened to us? We are demoralised, disheartened for nothing. Indeed many of us have lost our dear relations, some of us have lost our riches and yet others have been humiliated. But let us look at our past; we have lamented that we have never been in doldrums as in the present times. In fact, we have always been at the receiving end throughout our history and yet we have been the most glorious community, having contributed much more than the proportionate share of our numbers to the development of the spirit of resistance to the wrong, to the freedom of our country, to the creation of granaries of India, to the preservation of our independence since 1947 and to the development of industrial strength of our nation.

Do we have to prove to anyone that we are patriotic? Do we have to assure our countrymen that we belong to the entire country—indeed, the world. If they have forgotten, let them revise their knowledge through

Thank God, we were taught all kinds of lessons by our Masters; thank God, nothing was left to chance; thank God, our humanity and humaneness was tested in the battlefields and thank God that those who perpetrated those crimes of torture, murder and dacoity were themselves destroyed, even if they were rulers and even they had powerful kingdoms. Why? Only because we were held in straightened mood by the commands of our Masters; we lived His commands, we worked for Him; we lived for Him and we willingly died for Him.

As I sat at Amritvela, today, on Guru Gobind Singh's birthday in the presence of our perpetual Guru, Guru Granth Sahib, my thoughts went to the present condition of our community. Army's onslaught on the Golden Temple and the massacre of Sikhs in Delhi, Kanpur, Indore and other places, came to my mind, followed by frustration, fear and uncertainty now experienced by the Sikhs. And, in this mood, I sang the

pleasure for the sake of righteousness. Why, why, why am I worried?

I got up, bowed in ardaas, to my Guru and prayed incessantly for the strength to the Khalsa in this hour of trial and also his continued grace in recreating the Khalsa that he created on the Baisakhi Day in 1699. I went on crying, tears trickling down my cheeks in helpless recognition of that dark fact that I am no longer the Khalsa that my Guru had created. An urge rose in me then to believe in the Guru's immortal words: *Jab lag Khalsa rahe niara, tab lag tej dion mein sara; Jab eh dhare viprin ki reet, mein na karoon inki parteet.*

Yes, the Guru's words are coming out alive. Absolutely alive. Since we have strayed into dishonesty, black money, open, unabashed materialism with bride-burning, drinking, trimming our beards, smoking and innumerable other ills, how could we expect our Guru to be committed to the assurances he had given to the Khalsa. Let us see the position today. I am personally aware about certain situations and some of them detailed below remind us of our commitment to the Guru and they shine and will shine always as our examples:

(i) A widow pleaded with the crowds to let at least one of her three young sons, live so that he could be her support. The crowd shouted: we will let all of them live if they agree to cut their hair. The three young Sikhs said No and were burnt alive in the presence of their mother.

(ii) A young wife refused to be separated from her young Sikh husband being burnt alive and was herself burnt and perhaps dead.

On the other hand, I have very sad stories to remember of those who did not go through the holocaust. Many families wish to leave their places of work and livelihood but do not wish to return to the purity of their lives as dictated by the Guru. Attention towards saying oneself is there, saving one's business and property is there, but there is absolutely no attention to changing our way of life. In fact, a very sad story was recounted

to me of a rich Sikh businessman who had gone to the Punjab to find a house. Outside Punjab, he said, he had earned a lot of money but now for reasons of security, he wanted to return to Punjab. He wanted a house, at once, at any cost and he asked a friend to find it for him. He said: "Find me a house for 2, 3 or 4 lakhs at once and I am going to live here, doing nothing. Only drinking in happiness, for two years, for I have sacks of currency notes which will keep me happy for life! What a breakthrough for those, whom the Guru had taught:

*Mirat hase sir upre pashua nahin bhujhe,  
Baad saad ahankar mein marna nahin soojhe.*

The future is dark, certainly dark, for those who do not listen to the Guru and mould their life according to his dictates. On the contrary, for those who adhere to Guru's commands, the future is always bright. Let me recount how—

(i) When we learn to accept God's will in all circumstances as commanded by the Guru, the fear of death vanishes; it was the fear of death in many places which killed us earlier than the mob killed us.

(ii) If our Army officers and jawans—majority of them—trim their beards and some of them smoke, how can we instil in ourselves the discipline of the Guru? That is why many of us preferred to be shaved in the hope of living a few years more.

(iii) The illegal money that we have amassed has increased our love of un-Sikh life and made us the slaves of Maya. This has made such fools of us that we think building Gurdwaras with illegal money or using this money for *langar*, etc. is an alternative to our becoming the real *roop* of our Guru internally and externally. As it is, we are becoming a bad *Roop* externally as well, while making no effort to become good *roop* internally.

Shall we not be ashamed to admit that we are not the Khalsa which Guru thought could be the source of his Majesty, his greatness—*Inhi ki kripa ke saaje ham hain, Nahin mo so greeb karor pare.* Now, it is for us to choose to become real Khalsa, serve all mankind without discrimination in pure life and always have a bright future, or rot in our nothingness and humiliation!

## The future is always bright for those who adhere to Guru's command.

the writings of Tagore and Vivekananda about Guru Gobind Singh. He never thought of an individual or his disciple, he thought of the country, the world and the development and oneness of the whole human race. The Sikhs were created to face, resist and overcome tyranny. They were never created to rest in peace and happiness to enjoy the Maya; their primary task was to ensure the peace of other people, to ensure, by service and sacrifice, that no one could ever dominate anyone by force or force the change of religion by terror of death or torture. Why have we forgotten all this?

Indeed, the whole of 1984 has been traumatic for us. Indeed, we were paraded into political chicanery and extremist foolishness both by our Sikh leaders and by political tricks of the rulers. Indeed, we have suffered losses in terms of human life, livelihood and security-consciousness. But let us learn to remember that only *dukh* (pain) chisels the inner conscience into becoming a dominant tool of spiritual development.

Guru's blessings:

*Khalsa mero roop hai khaas  
Khalse mein hown karoon niwas.*

Then, why is our mood so disheartened today. Is our Master who gave us his internal and external *roop* going to abandon us? Is he not going to ensure that his *roop* does not fade away, his *roop* is never vanquished? Is he not going to look after us as he looked after Joga Singh. While I continued singing, I came across the lines: *Khalse ke how sad sad sanga; Khalsa mero sajjan soora, Khalsa mero satgur poora.* I wept, wept bitterly, realising that Guru had indeed showered everything he could on the Khalsa and yet I wondered whether I deserved this grace, this overwhelming love and this unprecedented oneness that the Guru had bestowed on me. Not only this, he went on to say that *Khalsa is my life, Khalsa is my mother and father.* And then, I felt, why should I be disheartened? Why should I worry? The Guru has prepared me for facing death, he has prepared me for abandoning wealth and



# Real Causes of Hindu-Sikh Cleavage

## Singh Sabha—A Sikh Puritan Movement

By : Sardar Partap Singh, Secretary, Kendri Singh Sabha, New Delhi

It is an irony of fate that the clear issues are being side tracked. An unnecessary controversy if the Sikhs are Hindus or not is being raised. It is argued that the Sikhs were not Khalsa by birth but were wholly manned by the Hindus. The Muslims and Christians in India too were not Muslim or Christian by birth but were converts from the Hindus. Thus they too be deemed to be Hindus and not Muslims or Christians.

This controversy, in fact, started soon after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. During his reign certain tenets and practices of Sikhism fell into partial disuse due to the Brahminical influence at his court. However, after his death the Hindus began to say that the Sikhs were Hindus. Attempts were made to absorb them as had been done in the case of other communities. They even declined to recognise the Sikhs as a distinct community.

The Sikhs themselves were divided into two camps, the 'Pure Khalsa' who observed all the ordinances of the Guru including rejection of idol-worship and those who had leanings towards Hinduism. The Puritans regarded Guru Granth Sahib as their Guru and emphasised that it contained not only the teachings of the Gurus but lays down the ways of life to be observed by the Sikhs. On the other hand the Hinduized Sikhs practice most of the rituals of the brahmanical religion but were Sikhs in name only. To restore the ancient purity of the original faith and to bind the Sikhs into a united community attempts were made from time to time.

In 1877, Swami Daya Nand Saraswati, arrived in Lahore at the invitation of the educated Punjabi. His vision of Hinduism based on the infallibility of the Vedas, shorn of idolatry, polytheism and the intricacies of caste system, possessing rationality and modern sciences, found ready acceptance, not only amongst the educated Hindus but also amongst a few educated Sikhs. Young educated Sikhs initially responded to the Swami with sympathy and interest, as they considered Arya Samaj to be a movement which sought to create a society devoid of

idolatry, caste and the evils of priestly dominance. The Samaj's major targets for criticism at that time were orthodox Hindus, Islam and Christianity. Bhai Jawahar Singh, one of the founder member of Singh Sabha Movement, worked closely with Swami Daya Nand and served as Secretary of Lahore Arya Samaj from its inception. His association with the Samaj brought Gyani Ditt Singh, Bhai Maiya Singh and other Sikhs to its fold.

The Sikh-Arya co-operation worked well for a year. Thereafter, the Arya Samajists began decrying Sikh Gurus and deriving Sikh way of life. This criticism went on steadily and its culmination point was reached at the first Lahore anniversary celebrations of the Arya Samaj. Pandit Guru Dutt and other Arya Samaj leaders, such as Pandit Lekh Raj and Lala Murli Dhar, sharply criticised Sikh Gurus and Sikhism. The reaction among the Sikhs was spontaneous. As a result Bhai Jawahar Singh and his associates immediately resigned from the Samaj. Thus a rift amongst the Hindus and the Sikhs was created. The Sikhs thereafter worked vigorously for the revival of Sikhism.

After a century or so a new Sikh-Hindu controversy has now moved from the platform to the press. A few aggressive

writers have not only started criticising the Sikhs but the Gurus as well. In order to malign the Sikhs and belittle the position of Guru, one Shri Ram Swarup in his articles 'A story of British Machinations' published in 'The Times of India' dated 20th-21st December, 1984, has on the basis of the authority of a Western writer said that Guru Arjan was a mercenary and Guru Teg Bahadur was a robber and a rebel who was executed by the Mughal authorities.

In quoting Mr. Petric, about the Fifth and Ninth Guru, he perhaps forgot that the Western writers considered the Muslim record authoritative and depended on them. It is well known that the Muslim writers, on account of their religious bias, could not give a true picture of the Sikh happenings. The imperial policy was judicious and correct in their eyes. The imperial record were their only reliable source of information.

It can be said without reservation that the Western writers neither went deep nor delved in the spiritual excellence of Sikhism and its history.

Sikhism was a revolt against a seething mass of a moral purification, debasing superstitions, hide-bound conservatism, meaningless ritualism, selfishness of Brahmins and the

bigotry of the Mullas. Sikh Gurus made earnest attempts to remove these evils. All those who found earth slipping away under their feet opposed them. They included the Brahmins, the Yogis, the Mullas, and the Sheikhs etc. Their stronghold was in danger. They counter-attacked and went all out to wean away the followers of the Guru.

Guru Arjan was a builder par excellence who placed his followers on sound foundations religiously, culturally and financially. He consolidated the Sikh church. The construction of the Harimandir at Amritsar, the compilation of Adi Guru Granth were steps by which the organization of the 'Sangat' was strengthened and given a distinct entity. This naturally displeased the Hindus traditionalists and the Muslim revivalists.

They poisoned the ears of Mughal Emperor Jahangir. On an exaggerated charge of applying a 'tilak' to the forehead of a rebel Prince, Khusrro, he ordered Murtaza Khan, the Governor of the Punjab, to "close his shop, confiscate his property and destroy him." The Guru was tortured under the law of 'Yasa' and killed. Emperor Jahangir has himself testified this order in his autobiography. In view of this it is incorrect to say that Guru Arjan was prepared to fight for or against the Mughal as convenience or profit dictated.

Muslim zealots felt extremely happy and lauded the action of Jahangir in doing away with 'Kafir' of Goindwal because it signified the greatest defeat of the Hindus.

Guru Arjan had been done away with at least a trumped up political charge but there was nothing against Guru Teg Bahadur. He has peace loving, and loathed everything that smacked of over-worldliness. His fault was that the Hindus looked upon him as the saviour of their frontal mark (tilak) and Janju (sacred thread). Guru Gobind Singh, the son of the martyred Guru, has written in his autobiography (Bachitar Natak) that his father laid down his life for the protection of 'Tilak' and Janju.

"Tilak Janju Rakha Prab tan-ka

Keeno budo kalu men saka."

(The Guru was the protector of 'Tilak' and Janju.

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## Whatever the majority says is taken for nationalism and whatever the minority grieves, be it just, a cry of anguish, that becomes communalism.

Thus he performed the greatest miracle of the Kalyuga).

Even Munshi Ghulam Hussain says in Seir-ul-Mata-Khirin that Aurangzeb issued a firman (edict) that the Guru should be hacked to pieces and the mangled portions of his corpse be hung on the four corners of the city.

It is a height of ingratitude on the part of the Hindus to belittle the martyr who laid down his life to save their religion.

Shri Ram Swarup has also assumed that the Singh Sabha Movement was sponsored by the Britishers to divide the Hindus and the Sikhs. The question that arises is how far this assumption can be regarded as true?

The Singh Sabha Movement in the beginning was anti-British. Its leaders were suspected by the Britishers. Their activities were seen with suspicion. The founder-President of Singh Sabha, Sardar Thakar Singh Sandhanwalia, was an uncle of Maharaja Dalip Singh. He was anxious to recall his nephew from England. In fact he went to receive him at Aden. Both he and the Maharaja were refused entry in India. He took shelter in Pondicherry and died there.

This movement which was started in the last quarter of nineteenth century to remove the religious and social abuses amongst the Sikhs was reinforced under the Chief Khalsa Diwan. Its first President, Sardar Arjan Singh Bagarian and Secretary Sardar Harbans Singh Attariwala, were suspected of anti-British activities as is evident from the records of India office.

Unlike other Indian reform movements, of this time such as Arya Samaj, Brahmin Samaj, Dev Samaj which were the creation of individual leaders the Singh Sabha was a mass upsurge.

There were three factors responsible for it:—

- (1) An awareness, born of general awakening that the Sikhism as commonly practised was a corruption of what it originally was.
- (2) Reaction to what was happening in the neighbouring religious traditions.
- (3) Defensiveness generated by Christian proselytization.

Typical of the mood which gave birth to the Singh Sabha was the note which appeared in an English paper about the mass conversion of the Sikhs into Christianity. It said "The Christian faith is making rapid progress and makes the prophecy that within the next twenty five years, one third of Majha (Central Punjab) area would be Christian. The Malwa will follow suit. Just as we do not see Buddhists in the country except in images, in the same fashion the Sikhs who are now here and are visible in their turbans will be seen only in the pictures in the museums".

Soon after the annexation of the Punjab, the Christian missionary became so bold that they set up a centre at Amritsar. The Sikhs not only became slaves politically and culturally but an onslaught was made on their religion as well.

At one time it was thought, when Maharaja Dalip Singh and some people from Kapurthala Raj, Kanwar Harnam Singh, Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur and others had become Christians that probably the whole Sikh community might be converted to Christianity. There was a report which is perhaps still in archives of India, by the missionaries that within ten or twenty years they would be able to convert the whole community to Christianity. They had made plan to convert Darbar Sahib Amritsar into a Cathedral.

In the beginning of 1873 four Sikh students of the Amritsar Mission High School proclaimed their intention of renouncing their faith in favour of the Christianity. This shocked Sikh feelings. Besides the Britishers engaged Shri Sharda Ram Phillauri—an Arya Samajist, to write a garbled version of Sikh history. To consider these matters some prominent Sikhs including Thakar Singh Sandhanwalia, Baba Khem Singh, a descendant of Guru Nanak and Kanwar Bikram Singh of Kapurthala convened a meeting in Amritsar. As a result of their deliberations a society under the name of 'Singh Sabha' was formed to restore Sikhism to its pristine purity and bring back to the Sikh fold those who had renounced the Sikh faith.

The movement picked momentum and rocked the Punjab from one end to the other. Besides the religious and social reforms it brought fresh leaven to the intellectual, cultural and political life in the Punjab. It would not be out of place to say that Bhai Sahib Bhai Randhir Singh, the Sikh Babas—Sohan Singh Bhakna, Baba Jawala Singh, Baba Gurdit Singh of Kamagatta Maru fame, Sant Baba Waisakha Singh etc. the pioneers of Gadhar movement in Canada and USA, were all the product of Singh Sabha movement. How could such a movement be dubbed as one sponsored by the Britishers?

The Sikhs are now afraid of

their existence, their survival. It is for our Hindu brothers to search their hearts as to how this rift amongst the Hindus and the Sikhs deepened and widened.

In 1946, Pandit Nehru had promised that if the Sikhs wanted a sub-autonomous unit where they could "feel the glow of freedom", he was prepared to give it. In spite of this, they threw their lot with the Hindus.

But after Independence when they asked for certain rights every body told them that things have had changed. No doubt, circumstances for the Hindus have changed as they have become masters, the Muslims got Pakistan. But what have the Sikhs got, except discrimination in every walk of life? Now they are being treated as inferior and second-rate citizens.

It is said that India is secular state where all the communities are respected but only 'wearer knows where the shoe pinches' unless the minorities are made to feel that they are secure, mere profession or printed constitution cannot give any comfort to them. It is very easy to shout secularism, but difficult to practice genuinely. Whatever the majority says is taken for nationalism and whatever the minority grieves, be it just, a cry of anguish, that becomes communalism.

The Sikhs have never asked for a separate state. As early as in 1947, Shri Durga Das, ex-Editor the 'Hindustan Times', wrote in his book from 'Curzon to Nehru' that when partition took place, he asked Pandit Nehru to find out from Master Tara Singh whether he wanted a separate state, and Pandit Nehru replied that already a day earlier, Master Tara Singh had met him and had assured him that he wanted to remain with the Hindus and did not want any separate state. Even Gyani Kartar Singh, who was the President of Akali Dal at the time of partition had declared that if safeguards were given then the Sikhs would not demand any separate state.


I may reiterate that the above is still the view of majority of the Sikhs. But it is for the majority—the big brothers Hindus, to see as to what has happened during the last thirty seven years that cracks have developed between old allies.

"Hatred begets hatred and love begets love. Those who still sincerely believe that the Hindus are Sikhs and the Sikhs are Hindus may ponder over the grievances and demands of the Sikhs and find a solution within the frame of the constitution."

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## GLEANINGS FROM INDIAN PRESS

### Probe into carnage and pillage of Sikhs

That an enquiry into the ugly happenings in Delhi has not been ordered is a fact which cannot be ignored whatever reasons may be put out in explanation. But the unfortunate truth is that no one in a position of responsibility has even taken the trouble of mentioning the reasons, if any. One plausible argument could be that a judicial probe held in public soon after the Delhi incidents would have been dangerous inasmuch as it was likely to further inflame communal feelings over a large area, including Punjab. Such an argument would not be completely invalid, but the situation today is different. It is now two months since the killing and the burning occurred, and it is possible to view the episode with a cooler head. Further, since certain measures of relief have already been taken, a part of the shock has been absorbed. Thus the fear of an immediate danger from the disclosure of facts through an enquiry has been substantially reduced. The Sikh community alone is not demanding a judi-

cial probe. Eminent citizens and respected organisations have also been urging the Government to take this step and to remove doubts in the public mind about the official attitude to certain individuals, including some known to be members of the ruling party, for their share in the Delhi outrage. The demand is not based on hearsay nor necessarily on the intention to embarrass the Prime Minister and his party. A public enquiry is essential to restore confidence in the bona fides of the administration in Delhi and the integrity of the Congress (I). The findings of the suggested investigation will probably prove to be discomfiting for the Government, but the alternative of total inaction would be equally harmful. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi should take the risk involved. It will help him and his Government in the long run. The indirect punishment of two or three notorious members of the Congress (I) in Delhi is good as far as it goes, but it falls short of requirements.

—Editorial in *Tribune*

### Holding society to ransom

"If all the sweets in India had been distributed, that would not have justified the burning alive of one single Sikh."

"...if burning alive were the punishment for vulgarity and folly, there would be few people left in India."

"The killing of Hindus in the past is irrelevant—or has the state abdicated its responsibility for preventing and punishing murder?"

"Is any Muslim in Delhi, gentle Hindu reader, 'justified' in roasting you alive because of Bhiwandi or Ahmedabad?"

"...is preventive murder now a right of all Indians?"

"Why should every Sikh be responsible for the doings of all other Sikhs?"

"Those who demand loyalty to the state had better ensure a state worthy of loyalty."

—B. Kumar in *Times of India*

### Civil rights in a democracy

Why are civil rights bodies in Delhi trying to nudge the courts about the anti-Sikh riots? It is to try and wrest a remedy from an unwilling government. Though the writ petitions have asked for the prosecution of named police recalcitrants and political agents provocateurs and asked for pension for the women made widows, there is always a prayer attached—the appointment of a commission of inquiry or at least a probe by the CBI. An enquiry should have been natural (see Bhopal) but it hasn't yet been ordered. The presumption is that the findings would be thorny for the government and the ruling party which have their eyes cocked towards the elections.

Meanwhile relationships between Sikhs and Hindus have

turned to one of unspoken reserve. Far too many thinly-veiled ethnic remarks are now heard. Sikh children in Delhi schools are asking for transfers away from the city, Sikh-property is on the market for sale and even if a recent estimate (150,000) is an exaggeration, some Delhi Sikhs have definitely migrated to the Punjab.

Public interest litigation lawyers hope that they can convince the courts that there is a case for investigation and get directions from the court to the government. At least three petitions have been put before the Delhi High Court. One on behalf of the *Nagrik Ekta Manch* sought the recognition of refugee camps which the government was ignoring. The court ordered the recognition. Another, filed

by a journalist, wanted the prosecution of some policemen allegedly neglecting their duties. The third, moved on behalf of the People's Union for Civil Liberties and the People's Union for Democratic Rights carries the names mentioned in the PUCL-PUDR report *Who Are The Guilty*. The list has been expanded (and the areas covered) and prosecution sought of those named.

Actually the *prima facie* case is sound. The people at the top swithered over calling in the army and declaring a curfew. For the first two days the curfew was nominal and the violence careened on. The lieutenant governor (then Gavai) declared that he thought refugee camps would not be required! The home secretary (then Wali) gave figures of casualties that were absurd (like 5 on the first day). Police were not just absent, in places they joined in the arson and loot. Pointers show that the wrecking, looting and killing were not spontaneous but organised and some Congress (I)

'leaders' from the under-side of politics seemed to have had a guiding role.

The evidence for all this will have to be wormed out of witnesses who still fear for their lives and livelihood. But it can be done. As the government seems coy about appointing a commission into the riots (Mr. Justice Thakkar is to enquire, in camera, into the assassination, Mr. Anand Ram into the question of the police and the security of VIPs) seven good men and true have started an inquiry themselves. The chairman is S.M. Sikri, former Chief Justice of India, and the others are Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh, Jajeshwar Dayal, Govind Narain, Badruddin Tyabji, S. Srinivasavaradan and Gurbachan Singh. They have started work at the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, visiting the blitzed areas and listening to whoever wants to speak to them. But they fear they will find the pinning of responsibility difficult without access to official papers.

—Chanchal Sarkar in *SUNDAY*

### Cutting off head to cure a headache

The very first three days of Rajiv as PM cost the country some five thousand lives and some Rs. 1,000 crores worth of property. The Sikhs lost more lives during these three bloody days than in all the three Indo-Pakistan wars put together.

The facetious defence of this indefensible enormity is that Sikhs distributed sweets and that they needed to be "taught a lesson".

Assuming some Sikhs did distribute sweets—which was very unfortunate, and in poor taste—do we kill people for that? When Bhindranwale, the hero of many Sikhs died, many Hindus in Amritsar distributed sweets. Did Bhindranwale fans go about killing them?

In Gauhati, there was so much sweets-sharing on October 31, that many *mithai* shops went empty. Are Congress (I) goondas going to kill the Assamese for that?

The irony is that most of the Delhi Sikhs regularly voted for Congress (I). Very few of them could have distributed sweets.

Some Sikh had certainly got a "wind in their head", but you don't cure a headache by cutting off the head?

This time the Congress (I) goondas with police help staged the slaughter of Sikhs—to cash on Hindu disapproval of Sikh extremism. Tomorrow, they could turn on any other caste,

class, community.

—*SURYA INDIA*

### Punjab back in the news

Punjab, which in recent weeks had been sidelined by the hubbub of nationwide hustings, is back in the news. The Centre now appears to be inclined to reopen the talks that were stalled before Operation Bluestar... Dr. Farooq Abdullah, who once unsuccessfully tried to mediate on Punjab (and was criticised by ungrateful Congress-I leaders for "hobnobbing with extremists") has once again offered his good offices. Will Mr. Rajiv Gandhi take him up on his offer, especially when it has been reported that the government may involve the Opposition in the proposed Punjab talks?

—Editorial in *TELEGRAPH*

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## Punjab Newsletter

By : Sardar Bharpur Singh  
Chandigarh

### Panel On Punjab Tangle

It seems to the Sikhs public that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi the present Prime Minister may not be able to do much to satisfy the Sikh demands.

The Committee of Central Ministers is not in a position to solve the Punjab tangle until and unless the Akali leaders agree to cooperate with it.

The Akali leaders' view point is that the Punjab demands have already been fully discussed and some of them were accepted by the Central Ministerial Committee or had been approved for their acceptance, and final orders of the Prime Minister were awaited. The entire picture of peace was wrecked by starting military action in the beginning of June 1984 right in the Golden Temple complex where deaths and destruction took place to a great extent and the Military occupation of the Golden Temple and all its buildings continued for months. Not only in the Golden Temple complex also the Sikhs were manhandled, their property was looted and in Haryana some hair cutting of the Sikhs living there took place.

The top Akali leaders and some other active workers were detained under NSA and they are still under detention. Government has appointed a Central Ministers Committee but the Akali leaders who could represent the Sikh people are not yet free to represent the Sikh view point.

It is not only the question of Sikh view point—it is a question of the entire Punjab and the prosperity and the well-being of its people—Hindus and Sikhs.

The Akali demands related for the uplift of all sections of the people of Punjab and not only of the Sikhs. The religious demands only related to the Sikhs and were their exclusive concern. There was no dissentient voice except from paid agents like the Nihang Chief Baba Santa Singh. Except for a very small minority the Sikhs were all and all behind the Akali leadership and supporting their demands.

#### Present Question

The present question which is puzzling the Sikh mind and also of all Punjabis is why government of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is taking halting steps to meet the Punjab demands and the Sikhs religious demands. What

is point in appointing a new Central Ministers Committee without setting free the Akali leaders who had previously been associated with the talks with Central leaders.

It appears to the Sikhs in general that it is only meaningless show of restarting negotiations with the Sikhs—if any Sikh is prepared to meet them and discuss with them the Punjab demands and the Akali demands.

Those who are under detention must first be set free to enable them to take stock of present situation before they can enter into any discussions with the central party of Ministers. This is so obvious and fact and if it is ignored it will mean that government of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi does not mean to bring about a settlement of the Punjab tangle and that the Ministerial panel is a meaningless hoax.

It is quite clear from the various statements made by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi during his election tours that he was and present day is anxious to solve the Punjab tangle. He is, it seems, sympathetic towards the sufferings of the Sikhs. Thousands of Sikhs are homeless—their houses were burnt and looted. There is in some circles a great apathy towards the Sikhs generally and their demands in particular are being opposed tooth and nail.

If Mr. Rajiv Gandhi can succeed in resolving the Punjab tangle in the face of such apathy and opposition from communal minded people, the name of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi will go down in history as a great political leader with high sense of justice and unprejudiced mind.

The first question which Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is to settle is to release the Akali leaders who can take part in the parleys with the Central Committee. As soon as this is done, the Prime Minister will have solved the tangle half way. The other half of it will be when the sub-Committee of Central government will submit its report. If the report is positive and unprejudiced—it will usher in an era of peace and prosperity but if the report is half-hearted and a device to keep the Sikhs out of politics for some more time, it will only further embitter the Sikhs.

### Three-man Ministerial Panel on Punjab Delaying Tactics

(Continued from page 1)

by Mrs. Indira Gandhi; this should help establish the separate identity of Sikhs and erase out their fears of being swallowed by the Hindu ocean. Religious demands do not impinge upon the rights of any other community and cannot, therefore, be denied.

A lot depends on Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's own personal views. With a massive mandate behind him, he can take bold decisions.

He has also been blowing both hot and cold in one breath. He praises the Sikhs for their valour and their sacrifices for the country before and after independence. "We hope to get even a bigger contribution from them," he said this week. But, at the

same time, he has reportedly told Newsweek, a US weekly, that Sikh must support the Indian constitution and disassociate themselves from the extremists before the army can be withdrawn from Punjab.

This is a gratuitous reflection on the entire community which is grossly unwarranted.

If extremism raised its head in Punjab, it was entirely due to Congress (I) strategy of burying the Akali moderates by bolstering up the hawks.

The beginning can be made with the immediate release of detained Akali leaders. Because they alone can speak on behalf of the community.

### Foundation of Harimandir Sahib

(Continued from page 4)

The Emperor paid a visit to the Guru at Goindwal on his way to the Deccan. This was towards the end of AD 1598. He asked the Guru to show him the sacred scripture. He selected a few hymns at random which were read out to him. He was pleased to hear them. The Emperor appreciated the quality of the hymns and in recognition of this he remitted the annual revenue of the zamindars of the pargana, who were hard pressed by a considerable fall in the price of the grain that had occurred due to the departure of the royal camp from Lahore to the Deccan. This concession from the Emperor gained for the Guru immense popularity amongst the Jats and the zamindars of the area. The peasants flocked to the Guru in ever increasing numbers. The influx of the visitors not only contributed to the fame of the Guru but also strengthened his establishment and increased his income. The holy scripture compiled by the Guru won the title of the Adi-Granth. As there was no binder at Amritsar at that time, the manuscript was sent to Lahore for binding per Bhai Banno. The Adi-Granth was formally installed in the Harimandir on Bhadon Sudi Ekam, Samat 1661 BK (1 August 1604). Baba Buddha was appointed the first *granthi* (head priest) of the Temple. From that day onwards regular worship, *kirtan* and other religious services began to be held at the shrine. Soon, the Harimandir acquired the pride of place amongst Sikh shrines. It became a spot of un-

paralleled beauty and glory. Guru Arjan commemorated the achievement thus:

"I have seen all places; but there is none other like thee, For thou wert established by the Creator—Lord Himself, who blest thee with Glory,

Ramdaspur is thickly populated, unparalleled and supremely beautiful.

Whosoever bathe in the Tank of Ram Das, his sins are off.

—Guru Granth Sahib

The Harimandir was pulled down by the Afghan invaders thrice, each time to be rebuilt with renewed energy. The last construction came up during the period of the Sikh misls (confederacies), AD 1765 when its foundation was laid by Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. This was on 11 Baisakh, S. 1821 BK (AD 1764). The construction, however, could not be completed as per schedule on account of the Afghan invasion in December 1764. After the departure of Ahmad Shah, the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar and resumed the construction work. It was carried out under the supervision of Des Raj as per plan through the joint efforts of the Khalsa. The reconstruction of the Sarovar, the Temple, the bridge and the Darshani Darwaza came up by 1833 BK (AD 1776), whereas construction of the *parkarma* (the circumambulatory path) and of small shrines around the tank was completed by 1841 BK (AD 1784) only.



# Impact of the Electricity Agreement

After 1966, when the centre took control over the river and hydel projects of Punjab, Rajasthan started making wanton claims over the river waters and even the hydel power of Punjab Projects. So far as rivers were concerned it based its claim on the proceedings of a meeting held by the Central Minister of Irrigation, Shri G.L. Nanda, the same person who later on as Home Minister, introduced sections 78 to 80 in the Punjab Reorganisation Act to deprive Punjab of the waters and control of its own rivers and set up a Commission to undo the territorial demarcation done under the Sachar Formula, for the specific purpose of putting up a show before the team of World Bank visiting India. It was clear to the Government of India that those proceedings could not create or transfer any legal or constitutional rights in favour of Rajasthan. That is exactly the reason that while the Central Government was willing to entrust to a tribunal the dispute between Punjab and Haryana, it was unwilling to place the

**Punjab demands justice, fair play, with strict adherence to the constitution and law of the land with a uniform standard throughout the country for the solution of its problems.**

claim of Rajasthan for decision by such a tribunal. That is also the reason that while the award of 1976 only concerned Punjab and Haryana, in the agreement of December 1981, the Centre also brought in Rajasthan as a party so that proceedings of 1955 should get the cover of a contractual obligation.

However, even this agreement of 1981 related only to river waters and not to their hydel power. All the same the Centre continued to entertain claims of Rajasthan for a share in the hydel projects of Punjab. And such baseless claims were made a ground for withholding for 17 years Central approval of the Punjab scheme of Thein Dam, and allow its cost to mount from 700 to 800 crores to make it prohibitive for Punjab. The only right advice for the Centre to give was that, since Punjab categorically denied any basis for such claims. Rajasthan should approach the Supreme Court for a favourable decision on its claims or rights. The Centre knew that in regard to hydel power there was not even a semblance of justification for the claim of Rajasthan, especially because both the proceedings of 1955 and the agree-

ment of December, 1981, related only to waters and not to hydel power which is a State subject, and more especially in view of the judgement of the Narmada Tribunal against non-riparian Rajasthan.

The Centre found that by merely withholding sanction to Punjab Schemes, the Punjab was not brow beaten. In 1984 the Centre found a new ground to twist the arm of Punjab. The Punjab had constructed a Thermal Plant which was to yield over 400 Megawatts of electric power. For its working and cooling it was essential to draw water from the Sutlej Channel (Experts say that Punjab should have made alternative arrangements for getting water and it should never have planned to draw water from the Sutlej and thereby furnished to the Centre a ready handle to stop the commissioning of the Thermal Plant). After doing the cooling the water was again to be diverted into the irrigation Canal. But preposterous as it is, Rajasthan and Haryana, both non-riparian States, objected to even this temporary use by Punjab of the water of its river.

Had Rajasthan or Haryana any justifiable claim, it could move the Supreme Court and get its decision any time during all these 17 to 28 years. But, now an obliging Centre controlling the Punjab projects, withheld permission to get the water for cooling the Ropar Thermal Plant and raised the issue to the level of a major dispute. Instead advising Rajasthan to follow the constitutional path and obtaining the verdict

of the Supreme Court, it became a self-appointed mediator, using the issue of cooling channel as a level for pressurising Punjab into entering into a hydel power agreement of the kind it was made to do in 1981 regarding the waters of Punjab.

There was President's rule in Punjab and the Governor was responsible only to the Centre whose agent he is. As in 1981, an agreement was obtained among the States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan providing for the exclusion of the hydel dispute, which clearly involves constitutional issues, from being placed before the Supreme Court for its judicial verdict. And the inappropriate and unfortunate part of the matter is that such a crucial agreement adversely affecting the long term constitutional rights and economic interests of the entire State and its people, was signed by the Governor. The Governor should not have signed it when the entire agitation in Punjab was mainly for referring the water and hydel power dispute to the Supreme Court and when there was no popular or representative Government in the State.

Another unfortunate part of the agreement is that deal was kept a secret till a correspondent leaked it out in the Press. The agreement, in effect, provides for arbitration by a nominee of the Centre. The agreement is stated to provide that the Centre would refer the matter of dispute for the opinion of the Supreme Court; and in the case it declines to give such an opinion, the States would request

the Supreme Court to appoint a judge for giving an award on the issues; and if the Supreme Court declines to do so, the Centre would itself nominate a judge to give an award on the claims and the award shall be binding on Punjab. The object of this agreement, as in the case of the 1981 Agreement, is three fold:

Firstly, it virtually gives a legal status to the baseless and unconstitutional claims of a non-riparian State against the Hydel Projects of Punjab, even though the claims are so untenable that during the last over two decades Rajasthan has never thought of approaching any Court or judicial body for its verdict on them.

Secondly, the decision in the case would not be by the Supreme Court but by a nominee Judge of the Centre which would be in the form of an award. This is evident because in the Constitution there is no provision making it obligatory for the Supreme Court to give an opinion or to appoint an Arbitrator at the request of two States. The very fact that the agreement provides for the third alternative of a Nominee appointed by the Centre, shows that Government itself knows that the possibility of the acceptance of the other two alternative requests is remote.

Thirdly, by the agreement Punjab is for all times barred from moving the Supreme Court and obtaining its judicial verdict on the unconstitutional claims of non-riparian States on the hydel power of Punjab projects. Just as the 1981 agreement blocks any approach to the Supreme Court for its decision on the constitutional rights of Punjab in its own rivers, in the same manner, the 1984 agreement closes the door of the Supreme Court against any approach to it for its verdict on the hydel power rights of Punjab.

In sum, the matter of the constitutional sovereignty of Punjab over its water and hydel power has been taken out of the purview of the Supreme Court and made the subject of arbitration by the Centre or a nominee of it. Thus, the ultra vires character of sections 78 to 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act would remain unexposed and unchallenged. Evidently, the agreements of 1981 to 1984 are clear contrivances both to legitimise the permanent unconstitutional drain of the 75% waters and hydel power of Punjab to non-riparian States and to destroy the constitutional right of Punjab under Article 131 to have the drain set aside by resort to the judicial process and powers of the Supreme Court.

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## Book Review

### India's need for updated technology

**BEYOND SURVIVAL : Emerging Dimensions of Indian Economy**, by Pranab Mukherjee, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1984, pp. ix plus 258, Rs. 95.00.

Former Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee outlines essentials for India's economic growth in the process dilating on both the negative and positive factors. Apart from presenting a broad economic survey, it also constitutes a manifesto delineating the future directions for development.

India's development philosophy of economic self-reliance had its roots in the country's freedom struggle laying emphasis on Swadeshi. We adopted economic planning, borrowing from socialist countries. It had to be adopted to India's quasi-

federal democratic structure. The pulls and counter pulls of different interests in a vast country of the size of a continent had to be kept in view. The human concern to eradicate poverty and usher welfare state was central to economic development.

Pranab Mukherjee shows awareness of the need for better management of existing resources and advocates for the upgradation of technology, which he says is a must. He takes due note of the 'great revolution' in micro-electronics and computer industries in advanced countries. Obviously, there is need to open up the country to latest technology.

This is also true of technological development in India in general. In 1950s India had

gone in for intermediate technology, commensurate to the level of scientific development in the country. That, by now, has become obsolete and needs replacement. But the vested interests with considerable clout both the politician and the bureaucracy, with power to

bribe their way through constitute a big road block.

One hoped that Pranab Mukherjee, if he would have got another term as Finance Minister, would have implemented rather vigorously a policy fulfilling India's need for updated technology.

—Sangat Singh

### Eat your happy way to slimming

**COUNT YOUR CALORIES** by Smiti Munwani and Indra Khosla, Paperback, pp. 196, Price : Rs. 30, India Book House Pvt. Ltd., Bombay.

This is an excellent book on your daily diet to slim and stay slim by a mother-and-daughter team who are experts in cookery and journalism. Smt. Munwani has published many articles on diet, nutrition and food. Indra Khosla has been successfully running cookery classes.

The book deals with obesity, slimming and diets. The detailed day-to-day menus, all calories counted and nutritio-

nally balanced, ensure that you lose weight while still eating delicious food.

The book is beautifully illustrated and includes helpful charts on calorie value of different foods. It has such chapters as *Nutrition—The Basis of a Balanced Diet*, *Calculating Calories*, *New Aids to Dieting*, and a large number of recipes to meet different tastes, temperaments and temperaments.

An altogether indispensable book for those who want to slim without self-abnegation.

—J.S. Bright

### The International Scene

#### China allows the rebirth of some private corporations

By : Vigor Fung

Minsheng Shipping Corporation once was China's largest conglomerate. In the 1940s, its owners were powerful pro-Nationalist businessmen and government officials, including a brother-in-law of Chiang Kai-shek, the late Nationalist leader who set up an anti-Communist government in Taiwan.

But Minsheng—like other private Chinese corporations—was nationalized after the Communists took over the mainland in 1949. The company's founder, Lu Zuofu, committed suicide soon thereafter.

Today, more than 30 years later, Peking is allowing Minsheng to resume operations. Its shipping fleet once again will ply the Yangtze River and someday may carry freight overseas. Minsheng thus will become the first large-scale private enterprise in China since the revolution. It will be run by Lu Guoji, the late founder's son.

#### Trust in Ex-Capitalists

Minsheng's revival is an example of the growing trust China is placing in its former capitalists. For years, this group was regarded with suspicion and often relegated to manual labour. But today the government is calling on its once-denigrated capitalists to use their experience, skills and overseas connections to contribute to China's economic development.

"The rebirth of Minsheng

shows that Peking wants to unite all kinds of people—including former capitalists—to exploit their potential," says Jiang Yiwei, director of the Institute of Industrial Economy in Peking and a planning consultant for the city of Chongqing, also known as Chungking.

Until recently, China had allowed only self-employed small businessmen such as peddlers and tailors to operate independently of the state-run economy. Now the country is willing to let large companies like Minsheng regain much of their former freedom.

Much of China's liberalization is taking place in Chongqing, an industrial city in southeast Sichuan province. Peking last year designated Chongqing, a city of more than six million, as a major centre for experiments with liberal economic policies. Chongqing—China's capital during the Sino-Japanese War—was selected because of its geographic isolation and because it is part of Sichuan, where China already has successfully introduced free-market agricultural changes.

"We can experiment with whatever is good for the economy," says Zhao Weiqing, Chongqing's secretary-general.

Chongqing officials say they expect several other private companies to be formed here.

In May, Bao Yuan Tong, one of China's largest trading houses before the revolution, reopened as a small-scale, profit-based trading company. It intends to challenge the rigid, state-controlled channels for selling commodities.

#### A Private Bank?

A group of former Chongqing capitalists is lobbying to establish a private bank, which would be China's first in many years. "If they submit the proposal, we probably will allow them to go ahead with the experiment," says Secretary-General Zhao. "If they succeed, they can go on. If they fail, we'll stop the experiment."

If Chongqing's economic liberalization is successful, it is likely to become a model for the rest of China. Chongqing's factories last year experimented with a policy of paying taxes rather than delivering all profits to Peking. That idea since has been widely implemented throughout the country.

The new policies are meant to increase competition, efficiency and production, which have been stifled by China's rigid socialism. Chongqing hopes to use private enterprises like Minsheng and Bao Yuan Tong to compete more efficiently with state-owned agencies. Minsheng, for example, hopes to break state-run Yangtze Shipping Corporation's monopoly of services along the Yangtze, one of China's major rivers.

"Yangtze Shipping's efficiency is low and service poor," says Huang Junhua, a retired engineer of one of Yangtze Shipping's subsidiaries. "Its poor

service has hurt our exports," says Mr. Zhao, the Chongqing official.

"It's good to have competition," adds Tong Guanchun, director of Chongqing's import-export department. "We'll hire the company that provides better service and offers lower prices."

#### Problems Encountered

Not surprisingly, Yangtze Shipping views Minsheng as unwelcome competition. And many officials in Chongqing oppose the resurrection of capitalism that seems inherent in Minsheng's rebirth.

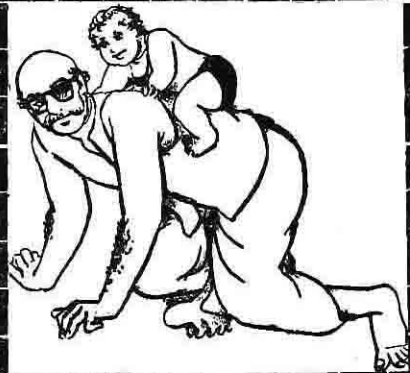
Minsheng officials say they will run the company according to Minsheng's traditional management policies, including the right to hire and fire workers and set business targets. The government won't interfere with Minsheng's operations except to collect taxes.

Most of the company's shareholders also are its employees. They will invest in the company and share its profits and losses. Explains company manager Lu: "The staff will be more dedicated to the enterprise if they are shareholders." No single shareholder will be allowed to control the company.

Minsheng plans to employ 130 people when it opens in October, initially running freight and passenger services along the Yangtze. The company later plans to operate services to Hong Kong and Japan and to form joint shipping ventures with foreign companies. Eventually, Minsheng hopes to diversify into other businesses, such as tourism.

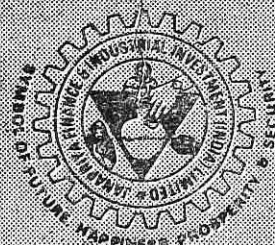


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